

VZCZCXRO8167
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEH KI #1058 3381730
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 041730Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHLU/AMEMBASSY LUANDA PRIORITY 1977
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0369
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS KINSHASA 001058

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/C, AF/S AND L/AN (OHAHS)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EPET](#) [CG](#) [AO](#)

SUBJECT: GDRC ISSUES STATEMENT ON RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA;
REAL DEAL IS OFFSHORE OIL

¶1. (SBU) Following increased tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Angola (for summary, see septel on SA Wolpe's visit to Kinshasa), on December 2 the DRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent to all diplomatic missions in Kinshasa a statement clarifying its position on GDRC-GOA bilateral relations. Translated text of statement (attached to diplomatic note no. 130.07/0554/2009) follows at para 2. More analysis will follow septel.

¶2. (U) Begin unofficial translation of MFA statement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has become aware of the content of the press release of the sister Republic of Angola regarding the state of relations between the Republic of Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whose wide distribution has included all foreign chanceries, thereby provoking the attention and the concerns of the chief of our diplomatic missions.

Therefore, while we recommend calm and serenity to all concerned, the MFA wishes to dispel any misunderstanding and put the issue of the state of relations between the DRC and its sister Republic of Angola back into proper perspective by reviewing the actual underlying context of the problem, the real background for Angola's reaction.

While true that there are here and there a few problems regarding land borders and of expulsions in both directions of nationals from either country, an issue which indeed has been addressed during negotiations held in Kinshasa on October 13, 2009, and at the end of which a satisfactory resolution was achieved by referring the borders issue to an ad hoc commission to be formed later, the real problem that hits a sensitive nerve in the Republic of Angola is the fact that the DRC legitimately exercised its right, as recognized for all coastal states by the Montego Bay Convention, by submitting its preliminary request for a hearing to the Commission on Borders of the Continental Shelf.

Rightfully indeed, and regardless of the degree to which the request is well-founded, the DRC's maritime territory shall be reconsidered which, obviously will not be without consequences for the Republic of Angola, which until the present time has been exploiting exclusively for its own profit, all resources found in the Continental Shelf including, particularly, oil.

However, as our two countries have said on many occasions through diplomatic notes, the DRC remains, to the extent possible, prepared to settle the issue peacefully and through

negotiations.

Therefore, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC calls on all diplomatic missions to remain calm, and maintain the firm hope that regardless of the nature of problems that may exist, they will never alter the good and profound relations that have united our sister countries for ages.

Done in Kinshasa, on December 2, 2009
Alexis Thambwe Mwamba

13. (SBU) Comment. Relations between the DRC and Angola have deteriorated steadily over the past months, as reported by embassies Luanda and Kinshasa. Saber-rattling by both sides resulted in the expulsions of tens of thousands of expatriates from both countries, apparently for reasons that have little to do with the official justifications. Until recently, neither side wanted to discuss publicly the underlying cause of the dispute between them -- DRC,s claim Qunderlying cause of the dispute between them -- DRC,s claim that Angola is stealing its undersea oil -- although both have asked for help privately in demarches to us and, we assume, others. The Congolese have now announced they are in the first stages of referring the matter for international arbitration, apparently in the hope the Angolans will offer to resolve the disagreement amicably through direct talks or with the help of mutually agreed facilitators. This approach would suggest that the Congolese are not fully confident they can win in an international court. The ball is in Angola,s court. End comment.

GARVELINK